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U.S. FORMALLY ANNOUNCES INTENT TO ESTABLISH AN ECONOMIC AID MISSION TO THE THREE ASSOCIATED STATES OF INDOCHINA

On Wednesday, May 24, Charge d"Affaires Edmund Gullion delivered the following letter to the Chiefs of State of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia or their representatives at Saigon. Simultaneously, Ambassador Bruce delivered an identical letter to the President of the French Union in Paris.

The text of the letter follows:

"I have the honor to inform you that the Government of the United States has decided to initiate a program of economic aid to the States of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. My Government has reached this decision in order to assist Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam to restore stability and pursue their peaceful and democratic development.

"With these purposes in mind, the United States Government is establishing, with headquarters in Saigon and associated with United States Legation, a special economic mission to Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. This mission will have the responsibility of working with the Governments of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam and with the French High Commissioner in developing and carrying out a coordinated program of economic aid designed to assist the three countries in restoring their normal economic life. The members of the American economic mission will at all times be subject to the authority of the Government of the United States and will not become a part of the administrations of the Associated States.

"The Government of the United States recognizes that this American assistance will be complementary to the effort made by the three Associated States and France, without any intention of substitution. American aid is designed to reinforce the joint effort of France and the governments and peoples

of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, on whom rests the primary responsibility for the restoration of security and stability.

"United States economic aid will be granted in accordance with separate bilateral agreements between each of the Associated States and the United States of America. The approval of these agreements will be subject to legal conventions existing between the Associated States and France. Initial economic aid operations, however, may begin prior to the conclusion of these agreements.

c "The United States Government is of the opinion that it would be desirable for the three governments and the French High Commissioner to reach agreement among themselves for the coordination of those matters relating to the aid program that are of common interest. The American economic mission will maintain contact with the three Associated States, with the French High Commissioner in Indochina and, if desired, with any body which may be set up by the Associated States and France in connection with the aid program.

"Mr. Robert Blum has been appointed Chief of the United States special economic mission to Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam.

"Identical letters are being addressed today to the governments of Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and the President of the French Union."

The letter of intent refers only to economic aid which will be based on the recommendations of the Griffin mission which recently made a survey trip to Southeast Asia and carried on consultations with the leaders and technicians of Indochina.

Secretary of State Dean Acheson announced the policy of United States aid to Indochina at Paris on May 8 when he released this statement following an exchange of views with Foreign Minister Schuman of France:

"The Foreign Minister and I have just had an exchange of views on the situation in Indochina and are in general agreement both as to the urgency of the situation in that area and as to the

necessity for remedial action. We have noted the fact that the problem of meeting the threat to the securityoof Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos which now enjoy independence within the French Union is primarily the responsibility of France and the governments and peoples of Indochina. The United States recognizes that the solution of the Indochina problem depends both upon the restoration of security and upon the development of genuine nationalism and that United States assistance can and should contribute to these major objectives.

"The United States Government convinced that neither national independence nor democratic evolution exist in any area dominated by Soviet imperialism, considers the situation to be such as to warrant its according economic aid and military equipment to the Associated States of Indochina and to France in order to assist them in restoring stability and permitting these states to pursue their peaceful and democratic development."